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KYRGYZ REPUBLIC

SNAPSHOT Television Station Addresses Housing Rumors

“Inconvenient Questions” dispels rumors about housing reconstruction activities and policies in Osh.



Bakhtiyar Rahmonov from On-Adyr village, outside of Osh city, had not received housing promised by the government. His son was killed during the June 2010 violence in Osh.

“People have come to us saying their housing applications have not been processed. They have not been able to get a response from the Osh Mayor’s Office... Why don’t they post, on their website, the list – names – of people who have received housing and those who are currently [waiting]?”

*– Gulgaky Mamasalieva,
Director of Interbillim in Osh*

November 2012 - “My old man was shot, I was injured, and our house was robbed and destroyed. I applied for housing back then, but I am still being promised things [two years later],” says Rahminisa Teshebaeva, a 75-year old resident of Osh, in an interview to Radio Azattyk.

Two years after the inter-ethnic conflict that displaced as many as 400,000 citizens and damaged some 2,000 houses in Osh and Jalalabad, rumors circulated about unfair and illegal housing reconstruction and distribution plans. Gulgaky Mamasalieva, the director of Interbillim, a non-governmental organization in Osh, described the plight of residents who lost loved ones and were therefore eligible for housing. One such resident, Rahminisa Teshebaeva, complained about the government’s poor response, as well as a lack of clarity and transparency about the process of allocating housing to victims.

Inconvenient Questions, a popular 30-minute weekly Kyrgyz-language TV program on current affairs, is produced by Azattyk TV, a unit within the Kyrgyz Service of Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty. The program addresses hot-button issues and is broadcast nationwide on Kyrgyzstan’s national television station. With support from USAID’s Office of Transition Initiatives (OTI), a seven-member production team travelled to Osh to shoot a 30-minute panel discussion with Mamasalieva, speaker of Osh City Council Taalai Sabirov, and a representative of the State Directorate for Reconstruction and Development, Kurbanaly Azimov.

The episode, which was later posted on Azattyk’s website and broadcast on the radio, attracted broad attention and prompted specific government actions. After the episode aired on television, the government released eligibility criteria for victims seeking new housing and established a state commission to oversee the distribution of new residences. In addition, after months of requesting information, Interbillim finally obtained a list of housing recipients and victims still waiting for assistance.

Telling Our Story

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